

Newsroom

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Georgia Southern University

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Georgia Southern University dedicates School of Nursing Memorial Garden

OCTOBER 19, 2015



Georgia Southern University held a dedication ceremony this afternoon for the School of Nursing Memorial Garden that honors the seven extraordinary young women involved in the tragic accident on Interstate 16 in Bryan County in April. The University School of Nursing worked with Facilities Services to create a special area of campus in memory of Morgan Bass, Caitlyn Baggett, Emily Clark, Abbie DeLoach and Catherine "McKay" Pittman, who lost their lives in the accident, and in honor of Brittney McDaniel and Megan Richards.

University students, faculty and staff, and members of the families and community gathered at the garden to remember each of the students while representatives from the University, the School of Nursing and the University's Student Nurses Association officially dedicated the site. Speakers for the ceremony included Jean Bartels, Ph.D., R.N., interim University president; Barry Joyner, Ph.D., dean, College of Health and Human Sciences; Sharon Radzynski, Ph.D., J.D., R.N., chair, School of Nursing; Melissa Garno, Ed.D., R.N., director, School of Nursing BSN program; and Emily McGuire, president, Georgia Southern University Student Nurses Association.

"When you have memories, you need a place to bring them so that you can reflect and you can do that in a place that's beautiful," said Bartels. "Today, we dedicate this beautiful place to think, to remember and to celebrate the beautiful lives taken far too soon."

Located at the School of Nursing, the garden consists of seven crepe myrtle trees surrounded by apricot-colored azalea plants — apricot is the color for the profession of nursing. The five center trees will produce white blossoms and the outer two trees will produce pink blossoms. Paired with a magnolia tree donated by the University of Pennsylvania, the trees' canopy will provide shade and protection for those who use it symbolizing the students' desire to care and protect others.

"The planting of trees to honor another individual is an ancient ritual," said Radzynski. "The tree is considered an important image of wisdom, knowledge and life. When a tree digs deep roots and grows wide branches, it does so through the abundant love and grace made known by the person who plants it or is represented by it. These seven women exemplified the love, compassion, beauty and grace signified by the tree."

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125 degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelors, masters and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of

academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu

Georgia Southern conference designed to inspire H.O.P.E. in HIV/AIDS care to rural communities

OCTOBER 19, 2015

Georgia Southern University, in partnership with the Georgia Department of Public Health, will host the 4th Annual Rural HIV Research and Training Conference on Friday, Oct. 23, through Saturday, Oct. 24, at the Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah.

Over recent years, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment has been on the cutting edge of research in public health sectors. According to the National Rural Health Association, rural areas comprise five to eight percent of HIV cases in the United States, with a majority of those affected in the southern region of the country.

This two-day collaborative forum brings together a variety of professionals in health-related fields to address HIV/AIDS prevention, intervention, research and care. Key speakers and participants will share innovative strategies and discuss unique challenges in providing HIV/AIDS treatment, especially to those in rural communities. This year's conference will focus on H.O.P.E., which represents

- Health care – medical, social, and psychological realities in HIV/AIDS research
- Opportunities – save lives with the latest in emerging research into HIV/AIDS care
- Prevention – tools for primary care, mental health and social services
- Empowerment – advocacy, prevention and intervention in rural communities

"During its fourth year, our goal for the Rural HIV Research and Training Conference is to provide an open forum to provide tools for professionals to use in the prevention and care of HIV/AIDS in our rural communities," said conference chair Fayth Parks, Ph.D. Parks is also a licensed psychologist and she is an associate professor of Leadership, Technology and Human Development in the University's College of Education.

The program will include Linda H. Scruggs, director of The Ribbon Consulting Group (RCG), as the keynote speaker sponsored by Bristol-Myers Squibb. Scruggs serves as a national leader with 20 years of experience working with women, men, families and youth impacted by health disparities including HIV and AIDS. Her work has led her to speak in front of heads of state including former

President Bill Clinton, to be honored by President Barack Obama, and to travel to villages in South Africa.

Other featured speakers include Gregory S. Felzien, M.D., AAHIVS, medical advisor for Health Protection, Infectious Disease and Immunization and HIV at the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH); Sally Jue, M.S.W., from the American Psychological Association Office on AIDS; and Pat Gunn, master storyteller from the Geechee Institute.

Registration is highly encouraged for all health care providers including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, case managers, public health workers, psychologists, counselors, social workers, family therapists, educators, advocates, community leaders and policymakers. Registration fee is \$160. For more information, please contact Georgia Southern Continuing Education at 912-478-5555 or visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/conted.

Credits applied for include Continuing Medical Education (CME), Georgia Nurses Association (GNA), National Association of Social Workers, Georgia Chapter (NASW-GA), Licensed Professional Counselors Association (LPCA) and Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES).

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